



Request for Expressions of Interest for the Rehabilitation of:



Lamson House
Bradley Palmer State Park
Topsfield



Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Deval L. Patrick, *Governor*

Executive Office of Energy & Environmental Affairs
Ian A. Bowles, *Secretary*

Department of Conservation & Recreation
Richard K. Sullivan, Jr., *Commissioner*

DCR Operations
Jack Murray, *Deputy Commissioner*

Division of Forest and Parks
Priscilla Geigis, *Director*

Office of Cultural Resources
Patrice Kish, *Director*

Historic Curatorship Program
Kevin Allen, *Program Manager*

INTRODUCTION

Within the thousands of acres of the Commonwealth's Forests and Parks are a number of historically significant buildings with enormous potential for adaptive reuse. Without direct public funding, these mansions, houses and cottages have fallen prey to the elements and vandalism. The **Historic Curatorship Program** was established to address this issue through the formation of public-private partnerships. The program was launched in 1994 following the passage of enabling legislation (Section 44 of Chapter 85 of the Acts of 1994, amended by Section 50 of Chapter 15 of the Acts of 1996, and the 2002 Environmental Bond Bill).

Under the **Historic Curatorship Program**, DCR enters into a long term lease with a Curator/Tenant who pays rent in the form of services, specifically the rehabilitation and maintenance of the property. The reuse of these significant properties must be compatible with its context while enhancing the visitor's experience of the public park.

Properties in the Program range from mansions on the North Shore to cottages in the Berkshires. Average lease terms range from 20 to 30 years. To date, nine of the Program's properties are under agreement, totaling an investment of almost \$5 million from the private sector into state-owned historic properties.

Through the Program, a "Curator/Tenant" is selected to rehabilitate, reuse and maintain one of the Program's properties in exchange for credit towards lease payments in a "work for credit" system. This Request for Expressions of Interest is the first step in the process of identifying a Curator/Tenant. Based on information gathered through this analysis, a more formal Request for Responses (RFR) is issued, which includes more specific cost estimates and program requirements. A prospective Curator / Tenant will respond to the RFR with a formal proposal, and will be evaluated in an open and competitive selection process.



Glendledge Cottage, Rockport, Before and After

“We love the physicality of the work here, and the tangible results.”

---Janet Fritz, Curator, Litchfield House, Great Brook Farm State Park, Carlisle

The purpose of this RFEI is to:

- Describe the Historic Curatorship program
- Gauge the interest in the property
- Identify new rehabilitation and reuse potential opportunities and challenges
- Help develop RFR(s)

Any subsequent RFRs will include more detailed information than the RFEI, including more specific cost estimates and program requirements. Any party with an interesting and competitive idea for the reuse of one or more of these properties is encouraged to respond to this RFEI. Submission of an Expression of Interest will not be a prerequisite for submitting a formal proposal, nor will DCR consider information submitted at this time to be binding on the respondent. No decisions about the selection of a Curator/Tenant will be made until the completion of the Request for Proposals process, which is scheduled to take place in 2008.

Estimated Timeline

Release of Request for Expressions of Interest	Fall 2007
Release of Request for Responses	Winter 2007 / Spring 2008
Tenant Selection Process	Spring / Summer 2008
Tenant Selection / Lease Negotiation	Summer 2008

Open houses will be held following the release of Requests for Responses to allow interested parties to better examine the properties. Feel free to view the property from the exterior. *Please do not inspect the interior of this property without contacting park staff. This property is not open to the public and poses serious safety hazards.*

If you are interested in receiving an official Request for Responses (RFR), please submit a letter containing the information outlined below.

SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

The Commonwealth invites all parties to respond to this Request for Expressions of Interest by submitting a brief narrative of the proposed reuse concept, a statement of qualifications and a brief outline of the feasibility of the proposed project. Responses should not exceed **three (3)** pages. Please submit responses before **March 30, 2008**. Specifically, the Expression of Interest should include the following:

1) Cover letter

2) Reuse Concept

- Describe the proposed reuse concept including incorporation of a public benefit component
- Briefly describe the compatibility of the reuse with the character of the park or forest
- State the impact of the proposed use on the historic resource

3) Qualifications

- Describe your role in the project
- Provide a statement of qualifications and experience in rehabilitating historic properties

4) Feasibility

- Identify the type of end-users expected to utilize the property
- Describe in general terms the type of financing proposed to implement the rehabilitation and operation of the property. Does the proposed project include the use of the Federal / State Historic Rehabilitation Tax Credits? (only applicable to eligible, income-producing properties)
- Briefly state the anticipated lease term

Submissions should be mailed to:

Kevin Allen, Program Manager
Office of Cultural Resources
Department of Conservation and Recreation
7th Floor
251 Causeway Street, Boston, MA 02114-2119

or email to: HCP.Requests@state.ma.us

Please keep in mind that your response does not constitute a formal proposal. Responses to the RFEI are public documents and will be utilized by DCR to develop the Request for Responses (RFR) for the properties. Respondents understand that information provided may be used in whole or in part by the Commonwealth. Response to this RFEI does not legally bind the respondent to the Historic Curatorship Program or DCR in any way. Conversely, response to the RFEI is not a prerequisite for submission of a proposal through the RFR process. The Commonwealth and DCR appreciate your interest in the Historic Curatorship Program and welcome your comments.



Historic Curatorship Program

Frequently Asked Questions



What is the maximum lease term and how is this determined?

The primary intent of the Historic Curatorship Program is to obtain the rehabilitation and maintenance of historic slate park properties in exchange for a long term lease. For this reason the basic transaction contemplated under a Historic Curatorship lease is that the rent will be paid to the Commonwealth in the form of work and/or services. The Department has defined three types of investment which result in rent credit - improvements, maintenance and management services. Under this “work for rent credit” system, the investment made by the Curator/Tenant is deducted from the lease value for a property. Therefore depending on the amount of work required for a property, the lease term could range from 10-50 years or more. At the expiration of the lease, control of the property will revert back to the Commonwealth.

What are the financial requirements of a Curator/Tenant?

The Building Conditions Assessment is the basis for determining the approximate cost of rehabilitating a property. Cash or sweat-equity, the non-monetary investment of time and labor, is an accepted method of capital investment and credit towards rent. When submitting a proposal, a confidential statement of financial capacity is required. This should demonstrate the Proponent’s ability to carry out the project. A statement describing the expected project costs and the anticipated sources of permanent financing and working capital is also required. Costs should reflect capital investment, as well as the value of any sweat-equity and other in-kind donation of services.

Do I have to pay property tax on the curatorship property?

The Curator/Tenant is responsible for paying all applicable taxes and fees which may be associated with the property for the duration of the lease. It is up to the individual city/town in which the curator property is located to determine whether it will collect taxes on the property. While most cities and towns currently do not levy property taxes on curatorship properties, DCR cannot guarantee that they will not choose to do so in the future.

Curator / Tenant Selection Criteria include:

- Quality of overall proposal
- Demonstrated financial resources
- Demonstrated experience in restoration / historic preservation
- Compatibility with park setting / programs
- Quality of public benefit component

What type of insurance do I have to take out on the property?

The Curator/Tenant is responsible for maintaining in full force sufficient insurance to cover costs of rehabilitating any partial damage or destruction of the property. Comprehensive liability insurance must also be maintained for all activities allowed under the lease. The value of the insurance which is beyond that normally required for a tenant may be creditable toward rent.

What will happen if the Curator/Tenant is unable to fulfill the requirements of the lease?

DCR understands that a Curator/Tenant's life is subject to unforeseen changes which may prevent them from continuing with the curatorship of a property. In this situation each case will be reviewed on an individual basis with DCR reserving decision making authority. In the worst case scenario where the property's historic integrity is significantly destroyed by fire or other cause, DCR will terminate the lease. The Curator/Tenant, however, should not anticipate reimbursement for restoration work already performed on the property under any circumstances. DCR also has the right to terminate the lease if the Curator fails to comply with the terms and conditions of the lease agreement, abandons the premises, or declares bankruptcy.

What types of changes can I make to the property?

In the application process, the prospective Curator/ Tenant will submit a proposed Implementation Plan, based on the guidelines of the Request for Responses. In consultation with DCR and the Massachusetts Historical Commission, the plan will become the framework for the rehabilitation. In the occasion of a proposed change outside the agreed-upon scope of work, projects must be reviewed by DCR in consultation with the Massachusetts Historical Commission to determine whether the change is compatible with the historic character of the property.

Do I have to restore the property right away, or can I phase the work over several years?

The Implementation Plan schedule is not required to complete all required work in any specific period of time. However, it is expected that life-safety issues and major work, such as structural stabilization, be performed early in the lease. The efficiency of the implementation schedule is a factor in the Curator/Tenant selection process.

When can I have access to the property? Can I live in the house while restoring it?

Once a Curator is designated, the Department is required by law to notify state and local officials of its intent to lease the property. During the notification period which ranges from 60-120 days, a lease is negotiated. Prior to the execution of a lease, a Curator/Tenant may occupy the property under a Special Use Permit, issued by DCR. Curator/Tenants are welcome to live in the house while restoring the property.

What is meant by "public benefit" or "management services"?

Public benefit and management services is work not considered an improvement or maintenance service, which is over and above the passive occupation of the property by the Curator/Tenant.

Examples of public benefit components:

- Coordinating a senior's garden and farm tour
- Sponsoring a summer concert series
- Opening a garden to a local group
- Joint nature/history program with park/forest
- Allowing a local group meeting/event space
- Offering horseback riding lessons

How often will the property have to be open to the public?

As stated in the enabling legislation for the Historic Curatorship Program, Chapter 85 of Acts of 1994, the property must be opened to the public no less often than twice each year "for the purpose of providing public access to the historic quality of the property." The method of opening the property will be determined in association with the Curator/Tenant.

The Lamson House

Bradley Palmer State Park, Topsfield, MA

Located within Bradley Palmer State Park, the Lamson House is a two-story wood frame Georgian farmhouse. Built on the site of the original 1680 Lamson homestead, the existing building was constructed in several phases, with a major Colonial Revival alteration added by Bradley Palmer between 1909 and 1940. The house is historically significant both as the homeplace of the colonial and Federal-era Lamson family, as well as for its associations with Bradley Palmer and his early twentieth-century manor estate. The Lamson house is a unique amalgam of Colonial and Colonial Revival styles. Many of the rooms feature fireplaces with original mantels.

Site Description

The Lamson House is sited along the banks of the Ipswich River at the Asbury Street entrance to Bradley Palmer State Park. The site, approximately 2.8 acres, is in one of the most traveled areas of the park, approximately 800 feet west of the Bradley Palmer Mansion and near the park's accessible trailhead. Remains of formal gardens are located west of the house, with terraced perennial beds, granite steps and low stone walls. A one-story, L-shaped Colonial Revival garage is located on the site. While the six-bay garage retains much of its historic details, including a cupola, hardware and multi-paned windows, it will require substantial reconstruction to renovate for reuse. The Bradley Palmer Mansion (Willowdale Estate) has recently been restored through the Curatorship Program and is also located in Bradley Palmer State Park. The property will be operated as an events center and overnight facility. Reuse ideas for the Lamson House could potentially compliment the restored mansion.



Lamson House



Lamson House interior



Lamson House detail



Lamson House interior, mantel and paneled doors

The Community

The Lamson House and Garage are located within Bradley Palmer State Park in the town of Topsfield. Recreational opportunities at the park include canoeing, fishing, hiking, biking, picnicking horseback riding, cross-country skiing and snowmobiling. Twenty-five miles from Boston, Topsfield is accessible to Interstate 95 and US Route 1. Train service via Amtrak and MBTA commuter rail to Boston and beyond is located in nearby Ipswich. Topsfield is known for its protected historic landscapes and its agricultural heritage and may be best known for the annual Topsfield Fair, the nation's oldest, which the town has hosted since 1818.

Topsfield is situated in the heart of historic Essex County. Local events, small towns, natural beauty, historic landscapes and geographic convenience are a few reasons why the area is one the most desirable locations in the Commonwealth.

Development and Use Issues

- The garage is in significant disrepair and may be past the point of rehabilitation. Ideally, a new curator/tenant would reconstruct the internal structure of the garage and integrate the usable materials into the building.
- Major rehabilitation requirements will include interior and exterior finishes (including walls, floors, ceilings, shingles, trim, etc), window and door reconditioning, and roof repair.
- Due to its proximity to the Ipswich River, the Lamson house is susceptible to moisture problems. Rehabilitation of the house will need to address the moisture issue in order to prevent any damage to the wooden superstructure.
- The house will require the upgrade and/or replacement of all major systems, including heating and cooling, septic, electric and plumbing.

Ideas / Possibilities

- Residential
- Office
- Antique / retail store
- Non-profit
- Artist / gallery space



Lamson House Garage

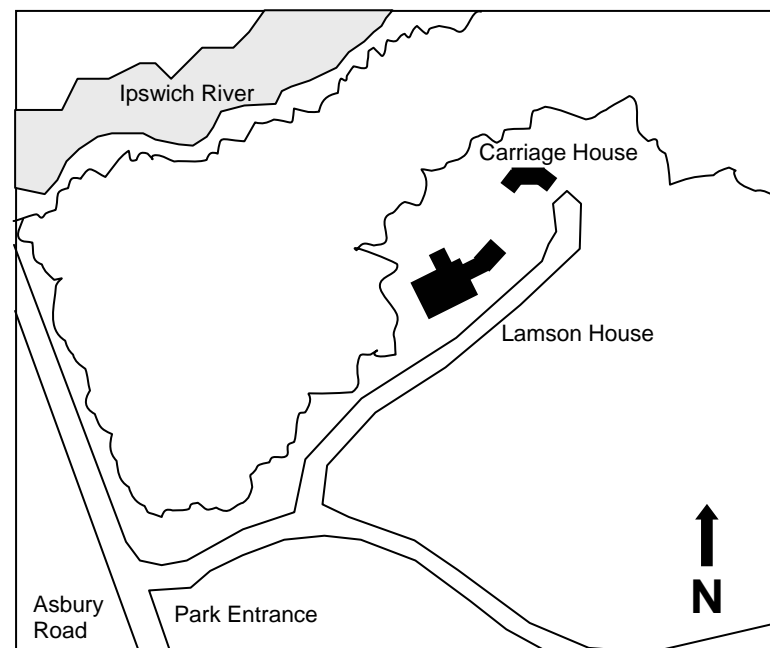
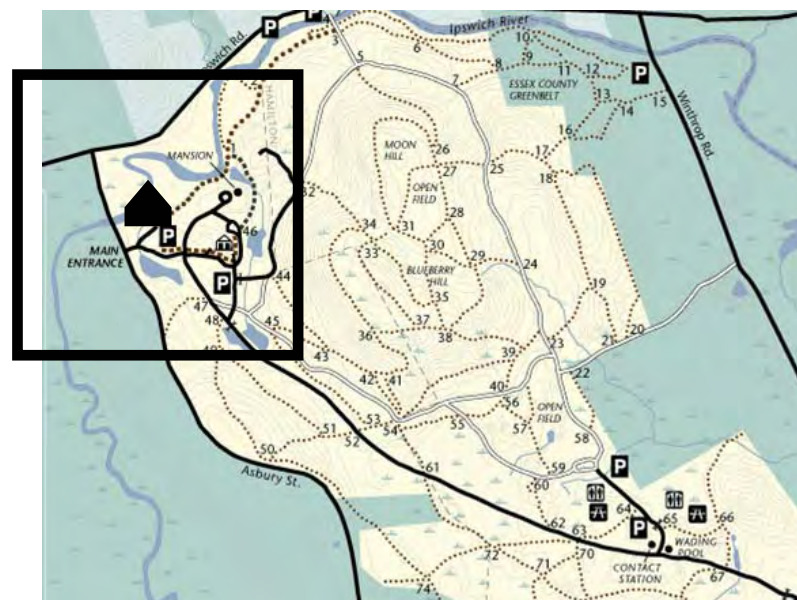
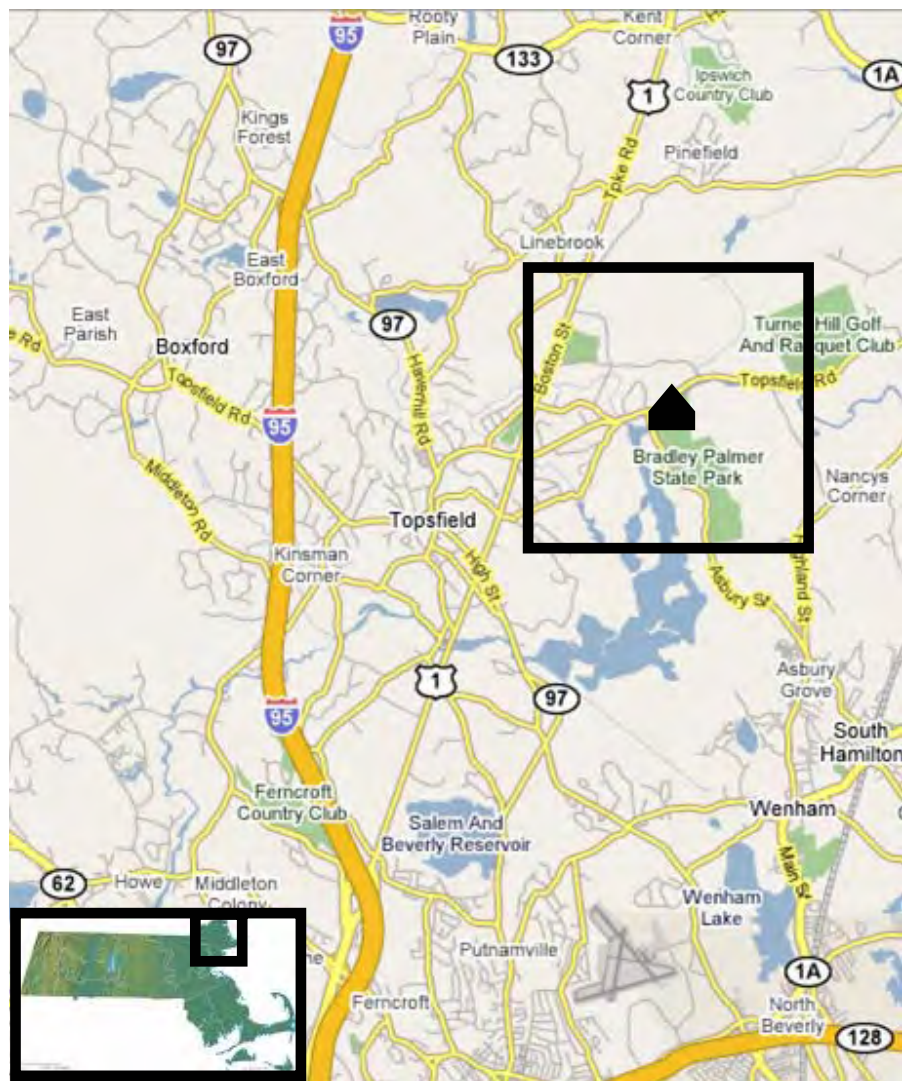


Lamson House, east elevation

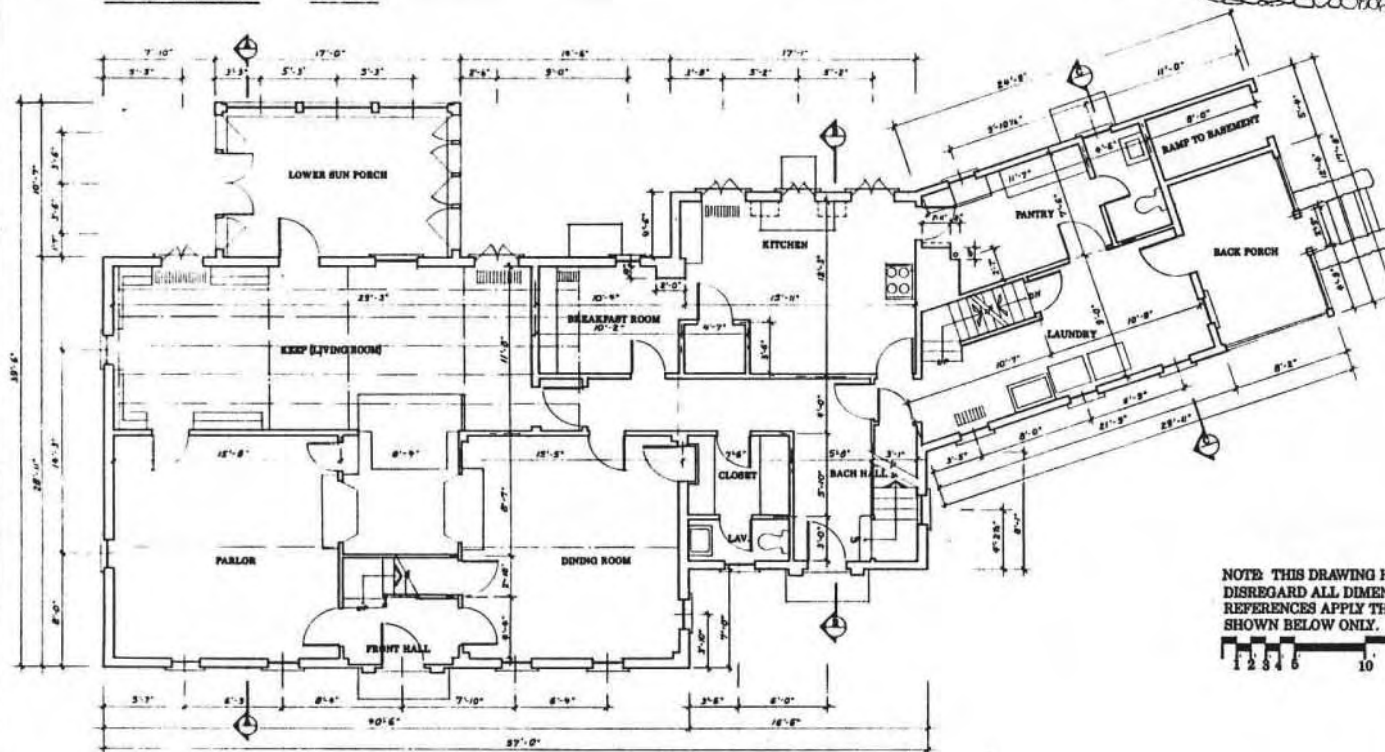
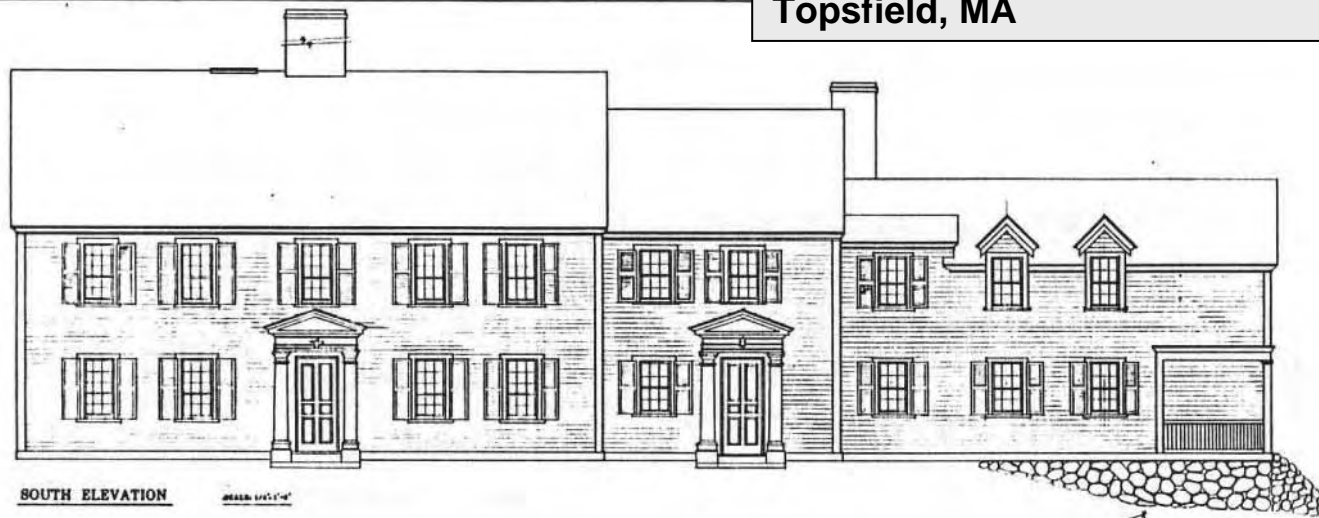


Lamson House, 18th c. section

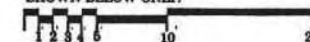
Lamson House, Bradley Palmer State Park, Topsfield, MA

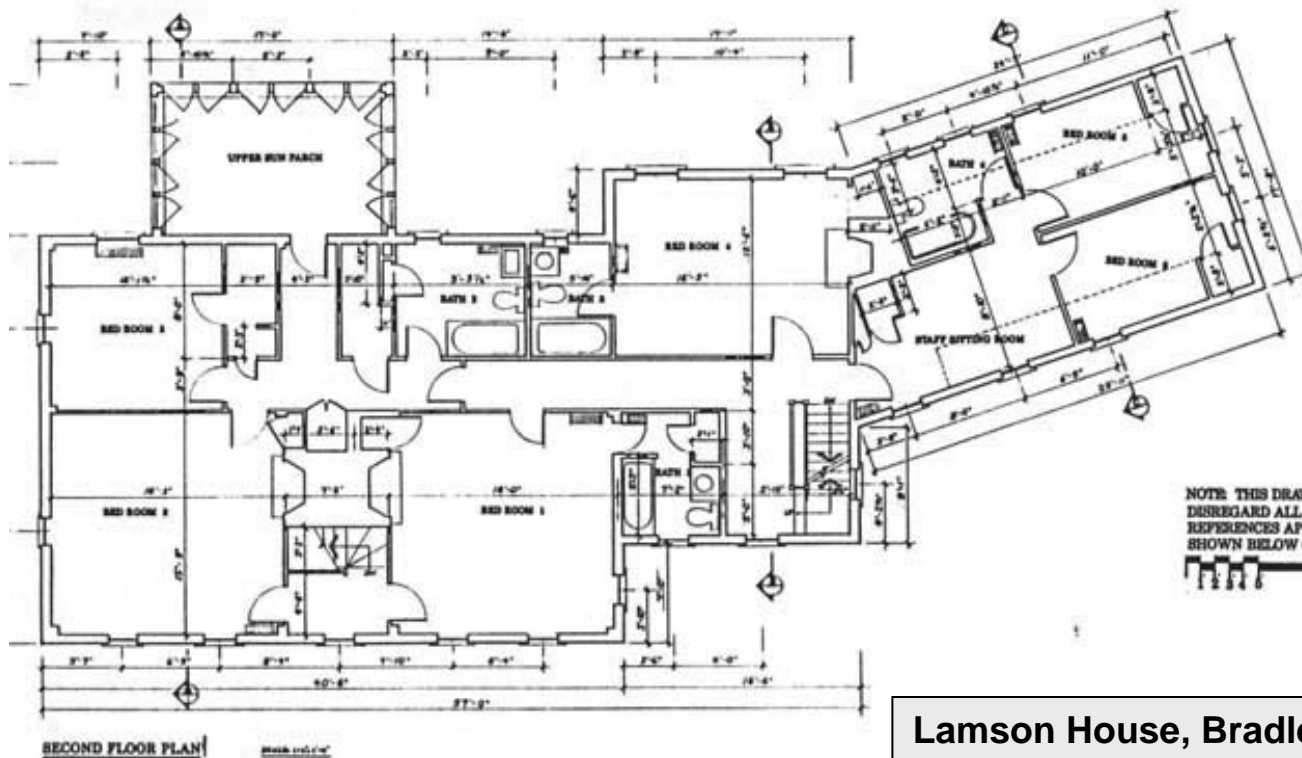
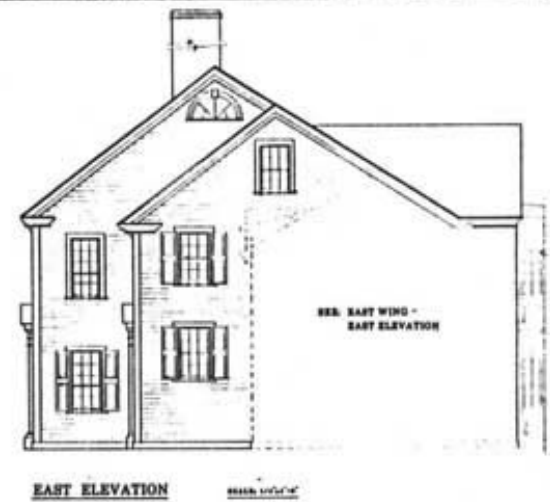


Lamson House, Bradley Palmer State Park,
Topsfield, MA



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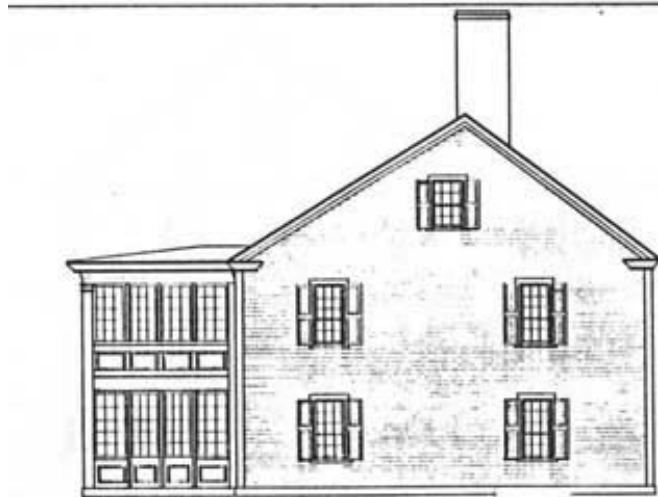




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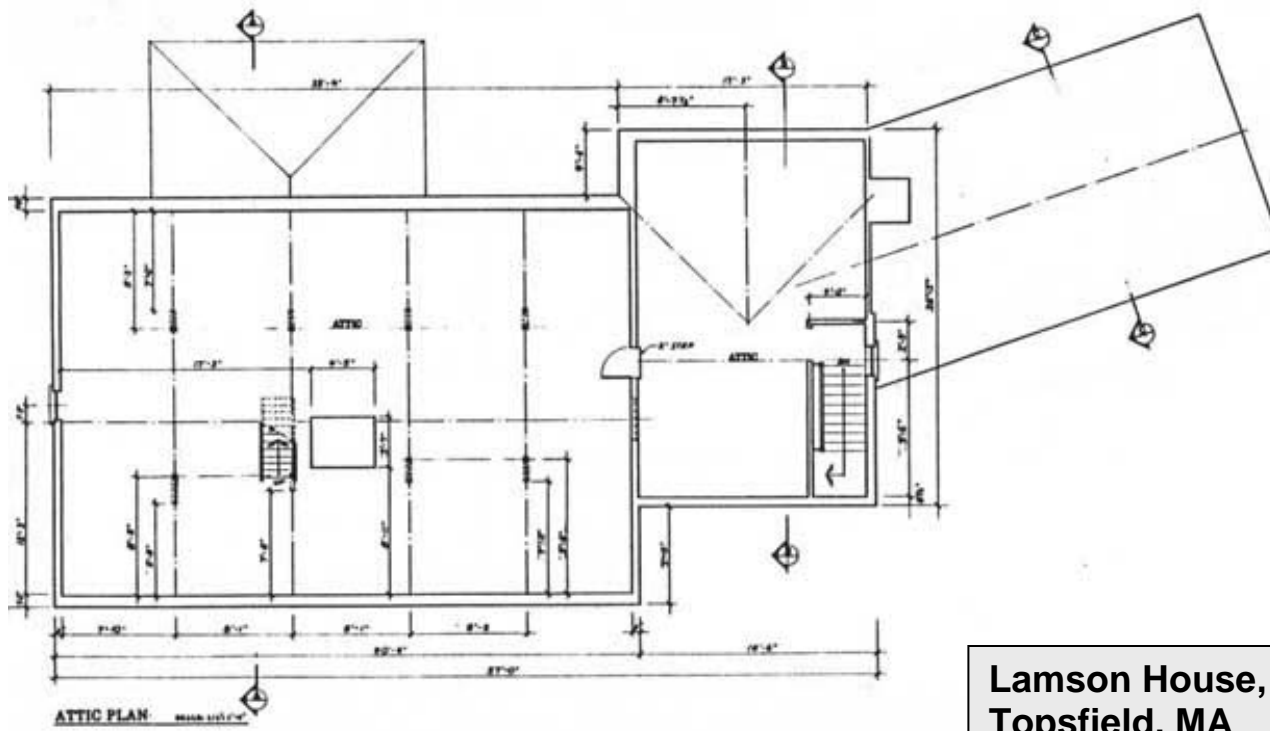


Lamson House, Bradley Palmer State Park,
Topsfield, MA



WEST ELEVATION

SCALE 1/4" = 1'-0"



ATTIC PLAN

SCALE 1/4" = 1'-0"

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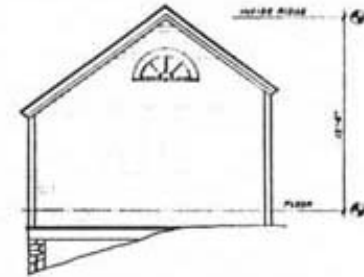
**Lamson House, Bradley Palmer State Park,
Topsfield, MA**



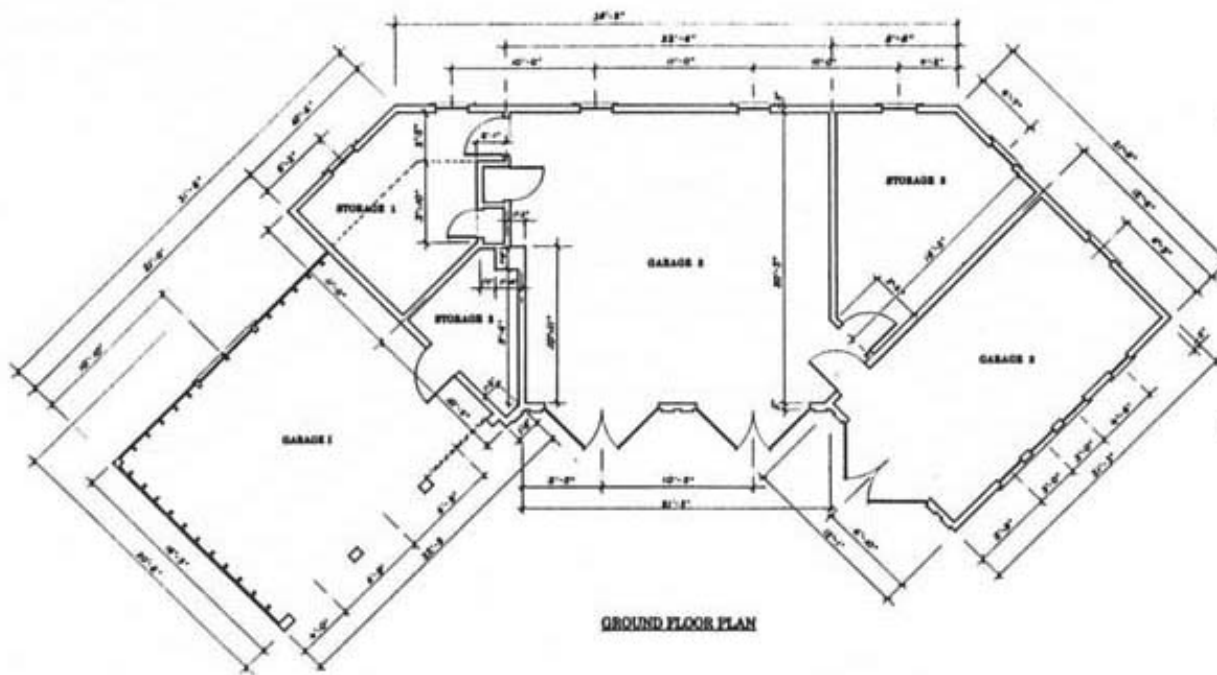
SOUTH ELEVATION

SOUTH WEST ELEVATION

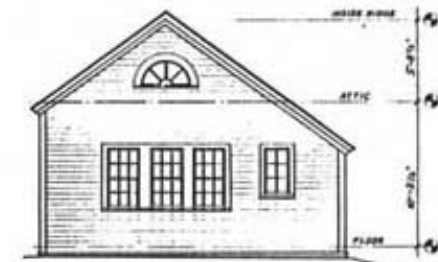
WEST ELEVATION



WEST ELEVATION



GROUND FLOOR PLAN



SOUTH ELEVATION

CARRIAGE HOUSE
SCALE 1/4" = 1'-0"

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